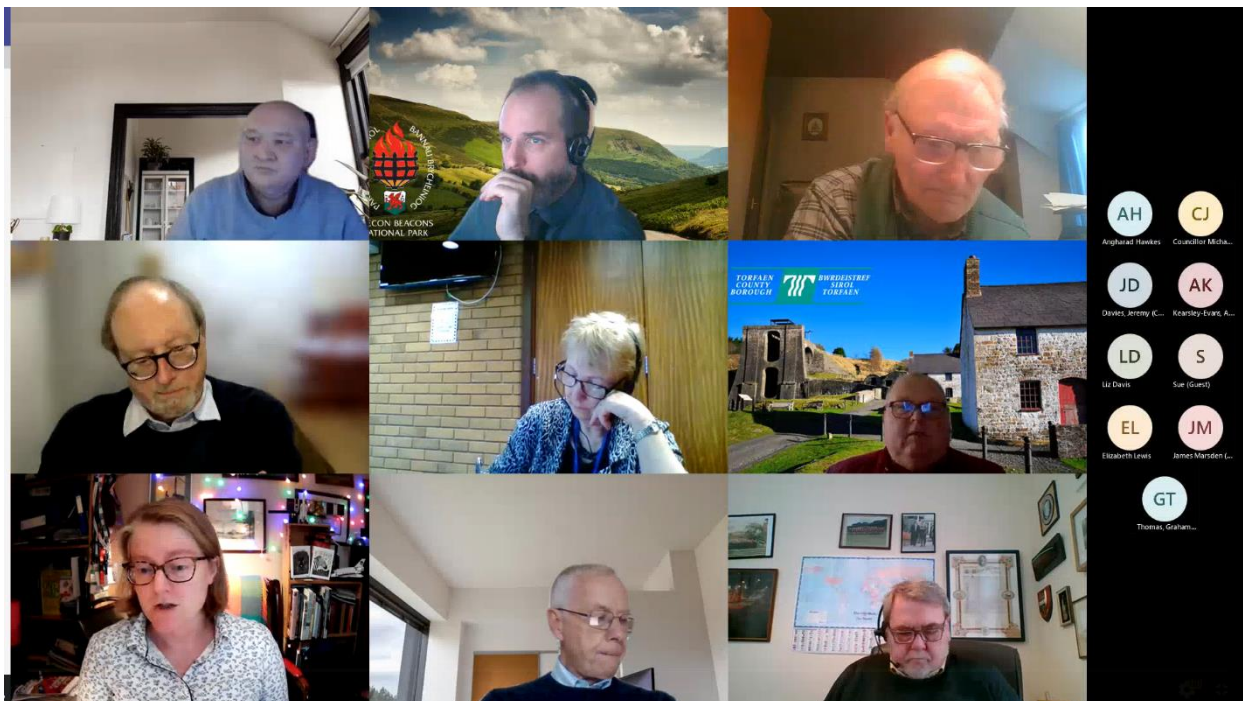


Brecon Beacons National Park Authority



Information for Prospective Members 2022



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Chair's Foreword

Welcome to the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and thank you for considering becoming one of our Members – the people who play a key strategic and decision making role in looking after the National Park.

As Chair of the Brecon Beacons National Authority it is my pleasure to introduce this information, which is designed to help anyone either thinking of becoming a councillor in one of the authorities which have land within the National Park's boundaries, or is already a councillor and interested in being appointed to the National Park Authority. If appointed I can promise you that you will be joining a committed, forward thinking team of Members working closely with an innovative, enthusiastic staff team to implement our shared objectives.

As a Member your role will be varied, providing the opportunity to work both in more formal committee meetings but also to take an active part in areas of particular interest to you and developing new ideas. You will also get the chance to refresh existing skills and to learn new ones.

Whether you are appointed by one of our local authorities, or recruited directly by the Welsh Government (as a third of our members are), you will have a role description and a range of support to help you in your new role, as well as a comprehensive induction and continuing development programme. Our small Democratic Services team will help you get started, and experienced Members are happy to act as mentors for you. You will join existing Members in demonstrating a high level of commitment, a passion for the environment and the communities of the National Park, and a genuine desire to make good decisions to support Park purposes. You will be taking decisions on behalf of the whole Park and all its communities, not just for your own ward, and you will aspire to the highest levels of conduct and public service. You will have a chance to make a real difference to people living in and visiting the Park, as well as ensuring that the landscape is sustainably managed for the future.

If you think you could make a difference in the National Park we would be very pleased to welcome you. If you would like to talk informally to someone about the role please contact any of the following:

CLlr Gareth Ratcliffe (Chair): cllr.gareth.ratcliffe@powys.gov.uk (Tel: 07974 377017)

Stephanie Davies (Democratic Services Manager): stephanie.davies@beacons-mpa.gov.uk
(Tel: 01874 620400 / 07976 812832)

We are in the process of producing a short film about the role of member. Your own Democratic Services team will be able to send you a link to this.

Many thanks



CLlr Gareth Ratcliffe (Chair, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority)

What is a National Park Authority?

A National Park Authority is a special purpose local authority whose statutory purposes and duty are set out in the 1995 Environment Act

Our Statutory Purposes

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park
- to promote opportunities for public enjoyment and understanding of the special qualities of the National Park

Our Statutory Duty

- to foster the economic and social well-being of communities living within the National Park

The Statutory Purposes and our Statutory Duty form the basis of all the work we do. They are at the heart of our long term vision for the future and is the starting point for all the strategic documents which we produce. Increasingly the Authority is developing policies and objectives which deliver against the goals of the [Wellbeing of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

There are 15 National Parks in the UK:

Wales:

Brecon Beacons
Snowdonia
Pembrokeshire Coast

Northumberland
Exmoor
Dartmoor
Broads Authority
New Forest
South Downs

England:

Lake District
Peak
Yorkshire Dales
North York Moors

Scotland:

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs
Cairngorms

For more information about the Parks please visit the [National Parks UK website](#)

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

NOTE: The **Brecon Beacons National Park** is made up of 500 square miles of landscape and communities. You can read more on our [website](#).

The **Brecon Beacons National Park Authority** is made up of [18 Members](#), with two thirds appointed by seven local authorities which operate within the Park, as follows:

- Powys 6 Members
- Carmarthenshire 1 Members
- Monmouthshire 1 Members
- Merthyr Tydfil 1 Member
- Blaenau Gwent 1 Member

- Torfaen I Member
- Rhondda Cynon Taff I Member

...and six Members with a national, international and global remit recruited by the Welsh Government through advertisement via the Public Appointments process and interview.

What can the Authority do?

National Park Authorities have the following powers:

- To do anything which they believe will help to achieve National Park purposes (under Section 65 of the 1995 Act);
- To levy constituent local authorities for a proportion of their funding. We also receive project funding from the Welsh Government and other agencies which is bid for on an annual basis);
- All the 'countryside powers' available to local government, eg. to make management agreements with anyone to achieve National Park purposes
- To act as the local planning authority
- To act as the relevant authority for access to open countryside under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act

What does a Member do?

The Authority has under 100 full time staff and many volunteers. Collectively they engage in conservation work, path maintenance, education, destination marketing and planning services. They are delivering objectives laid out in the National Park Management Plan which covers 20 years and is for all landowners in the Park. National Park Authority Members are the decision makers who give the staff strategic direction. All Members sit on the main National Park Authority which meets every two months and decides direction and strategy for the Authority as a whole. Some Members also sit on our Planning Committee which takes place every six weeks to decide the 5% of planning applications which are not delegated to officers – these are often the



larger or controversial applications. Sometimes Members decide to visit the sites of one or more planning applications. Members can also apply to sit on the Audit and Risk Committee, Finance and Performance Committee or the Sustainable Development Fund Committee. Full details can be found in our [Scheme of Delegation](#). Members can also become “Champions” for particular areas of work about which they feel passionate.

Former Member working with Volunteers

While Members are appointed to the National Park Authority from the seven local authorities and the Welsh Government they all have the same [role description](#), [code of conduct](#) and [supporting protocols](#). They represent the interests of the National Park and its communities rather than those of their appointing bodies – there are no ‘local Members’ although sometimes local knowledge can be valuable in decision making.

A Member contributes to the work of the Authority in various ways:

- Strategic decision making through the [committee structure](#), including those which make recommendations to the full Authority
- Monitoring performance and allocation of resources
- Representing the Authority on [outside bodies](#) or becoming a [Member Champion](#)
- Supporting good governance and high standards of behaviour

(Control and Click on the highlighted words to find out more from our website):

The Authority delegates responsibility for day to day decision-making to its staff. There are clear guidelines on which decisions officers can make and which need to be decided by Members. This system ensures effective decision making at all levels of the organisation. The committee structure is shown at **Annex 2**.



Former Members learning how the Education team uses GPS with school

What commitment will I need to make?

The table below shows how many meetings you should expect to come to each year. The total will depend on how many committees you sit on - for example if you are a member of the Planning Committee or Audit and Risk Committee you will need to commit more days each year – the table shows the maximum time for a Member who is not a Chair or Deputy Chair:

NPA (Inc AGM /EGMs)	Planning	Audit and Risk	Finance and Performance	Standards	SDF	Chairs	Task & Finish Groups / forums /	Induction (additional days in 1 st year)	Ongoing development
8	8	4	4	2	4	4	4	6	6

At present all Authority and committee meetings are being held remotely via Public-I or Teams. We try to avoid major clashes with meetings in the seven constituent authorities but this is not always possible and sometimes Members may need to decide where they are most needed.

The committee calendar for 2022 can be viewed on our website [Committee Calendar](#). **Key dates for members are National Park Authority meetings and Member Development Events. You may also be a member of any of the committees listed above.**

Remuneration: Will I get paid?

Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales has a remit for prescribing levels of remuneration for all Members of National Park Authorities, based on an expected commitment of 44 days per annum, with any more than that deemed public service. The full list of allowances is given in the Authority's [Schedule of Member Remuneration](#), but in summary the allowances from 1 April 2022 are:

- All Members receive an annual Basic Salary of £4738 payable monthly in arrears
- The Chair of the Authority receives £13531 (inclusive of Basic Salary)
- The Deputy Chair of the Authority and two committee Chairs receive £8478 (inclusive of Basic Salary)
- There is a separate allowance scale for independent Members of Standards Committees
- Mileage is paid at the local authority rate of 45p per mile
- Subsistence can be claimed at £28 in any 24 hour period when travelling on official business
- Overnight stays are payable at local authority rates
- Staying with friends and family - £30 per night
- Overnight stay: London £200 per night/elsewhere £95 per night.

The Authority also pays a care allowance for dependents on receipt of paid invoices. All expenses are paid in arrears on receipt of a validated expense claim form each month.

Induction and Development: What support will I get?

The Authority holds the Welsh Local Government Association Advanced Award for Member Support and Development and has a comprehensive [induction and continuing development framework](#) which aims to provide Members with the skills and knowledge they require to be effective. The development is made up of five stages:

1. Core induction for all Members
2. Skills for committees
3. Land management, conservation and biodiversity
4. Raising awareness and understanding, and providing opportunities for access and recreation
5. Planning for and supporting sustainable communities

Within each stage are a number of modules which are sometimes grouped together to make the most effective use of Members' time.



Members visiting Penpont near Brecon on a Climate Change Day in 2019

What's it really like being a Member?

Here's what our Members say.....

"My experience as a member is to be able to support Future Beacons and the climate change emergency for my Authority of Torfaen and protect the outstanding natural beauty of the Brecon Beacons National Park"

"The satisfaction that's gained from being part of this organisation is far greater than the sum of the effort and time spent pursuing its purposes."

"It's a great privilege to be working closely with a committed team delivering projects that will make a positive difference in one of the most beautiful landscapes in the world."

“It has been a pleasure and a privilege to be a member over many years. Responsibility for ensuring the environmental development of the National Park, improving the experience of living and working and visiting the Park, has been most rewarding, and I would encourage those committed to such principles to become involved as a member of the Authority .”

Annexes

- 1 Map of the National Park
- 2 Committee structure from 1 July 2022

Links

The Brecon Beacon National Park Authority’s website: www.beacons-npa.gov.uk

The Brecon Beacons Destination website: www.breconbeacons.org

WLGA Guide for Prospective Councillors – to be published in April

<https://www.beacouncillor.wales/>

[Protocol for appointing members to National Park Authorities](#)





